B.C. Supported Child Care Program

Final Report

Evaluation and Data Development
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This evaluation study of the transition to Supported Child Care Strategic Initiative was conducted by the Cumorah Group under the direction of the Federal-Provincial Joint Evaluation Working Group. This joint committee was comprised of representatives from the partners – Human Resources Development Canada's BC Region and National Headquarters, and the former BC Ministries of Health, Social Services, Women's Equality, Skills/Training and Education.

The evaluation team would like to thank all those who contributed to the study.

MINISTRY CHANGES

There have been various Ministry changes since the signing of the Strategic Initiatives Agreement. These changes are as follows:

- the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour and the Ministry of Education were restructured to form the two Ministries: Ministry of Education, Skills and Training and Ministry of Labour (February 28, 1996); and,

- those portions of the Ministries of Health, Social Services, and Women's Equality, which are involved with Supported Child Care, have merged (along with other portions of their Ministries and parts of Education and Attorney General) to form the Ministry for Children and Families (September 23, 1996).

In order to maintain the focus, these changes are not discussed in the body of the report.

FOREWORD

The transition to Supported Child Care (SCC) is one of three components of the Child Care Strategic Initiative, jointly funded by the Federal and Provincial Governments. The other two components are One Stop Access Centres and Regional Delivery Models/ Community Demonstration Projects. The overriding goals of the Child Care Strategic Initiative are to:

- improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of child care; and,

- create a more responsive, effective, efficient, and inclusive system for child care in BC.

- a separate framework has been adopted for evaluating the transition to SCC as it differs from the other two funded components. The other components are pilots of alternative models of service delivery, while the transition to SCC is a program shift which is being implemented provincially. In addition, while the other components address the child care sector as a whole, SCC specifically targets children with special needs and their families. The funding for this component addresses the transition from Special Needs Day Care to SCC, with the transition anticipated to be complete by 1999.

A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE

Throughout this report, the phrase *children with special needs* is used. While it is recognized that such words may cause readers discomfort by emphasizing the "separateness" of children, the term is used primarily to maintain clarity on whom the target population impacted by this program shift is. Furthermore, while the new framework intends to replace the diagnosis/disability-based approach to establishing eligibility with one based on a child's need for extra support, such criteria are not yet developed.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the results of a formative evaluation of the first fiscal year (approximately June 1, 1995 to March, 1996) of the transition from Special Needs Day Care to Supported Child Care (SCC). It provides a description and assessment of program design and implementation with the intent of ensuring that the "transition" is on track.

The information upon which this report is based was gathered via documentation reviews and interviews with representatives of the five ministries who have major roles to play in the transition to SCC at the provincial level and representatives from the nine Ministry of Social Services (MSS) regions.

The results suggest that the SCC framework is consistent with the needs of the population. Because it grew out of a lengthy process of research and consultation with stakeholders, attention was paid in the development of the framework to both the support needs of children with special needs and the child care needs of their families.

In terms of design, SCC is not structured or defined to the extent many new initiatives are when undertaken on such a broad scale. SCC emphasizes principles and outcomes rather than timelines and program/structural characteristics. Respondents expressed support for this approach in general, as well as for the principles and outcomes themselves. Despite this, difficulties have arisen as the principles/outcomes have not been priorized or defined in relation to one another. This is particularly the case with respect to 'inclusion' and 'family-centred care' which encompasses parental choice as a leading descriptor. It is not clear if the framework intends parental choice only within the context of inclusive settings. Unless direction is provided, the lack of clarity will continue to challenge those responsible for making the transition to SCC.

The Province chose to implement SCC as a program shift — granting regions and communities the freedom to evolve at their own pace and according to local needs — while expecting the transition to be complete across the province by March 1999. Respondents were nearly unanimous in their support of this approach to implementing SCC. They believe that it will allow them to create a responsive system of child care for children with special needs and their families. Despite this, much of the information received suggests that the community development approach is also the greatest challenge facing the success of the transition process for it is much more dependent than centrally-dictated approaches upon the varied competencies and commitment of local people. Furthermore, the community development approach makes the program ripe for inconsistencies/inequities.

The framework for the transition to SCC rests on centralized support and direction to the regions/communities in five component areas. These include Inter-ministerial Co-ordination, Training, Cost-Sharing, Tools to Support Inclusion, and Supports to Community Development. Responsibility for these activities is split across several Ministries. At the provincial level, inter-ministerial co-ordination has clearly been a strength of the transition process to date. While progress was made in the other component areas, it was not as rapid as originally envisioned. The results highlight the continued need for centralized support and direction, particularly in terms of philosophy, policy and procedures. Furthermore, at the end of year one, on-going challenges include information sharing with the regions and achieving "buy-in" among stakeholders.

Province of British Columbia

Ministry for Children and Families

MEMORANDUM

September 24, 1997

Ruth Shane
Human Resources Development Canada

Re: Management Response to 1995/96 Federal/Provincial *Strategic Initiative* Improved Access to Child Care Pilot Project Formative Evaluation Report

The *Ministry for Children and Families, Child Care Service Team* has reviewed carefully the formative evaluation conducted for the 1995/96 *Strategic Initiatives* funded projects. The team is satisfied with the report's conclusions, are unanimous in the conclusion that the report is a useful document in terms of its value in guiding future project planning, development and coordination. The major lessons learned from the activities surrounding the implementation of the 1995/96 projects included the need for inclusion of all stakeholders in decision making processes (ranging from initial program conceptualization to the service implementation and delivery), and the need to realistically acknowledge and effectively address resource constraints in the early planning and implementation stages. The lessons learned from the formative evaluation were applied to activities surrounding the 1996/97 funded projects. This ensured that the barriers to project development and implementation were not re-encountered in 1996/97, thus allowing for a successful program implementation process highlighted by the establishment of successful government and community partnerships.

Sandra J. Griffin
A/Director

c.c. Angela Micco
Kris Aitken
Janice Nelson, HRDC Victoria

INTRODUCTION

In December 1994, the Government of BC endorsed a new child care direction for the families of children with special needs. The new direction would see the current Special Needs Day Care (SNDC) program evolve into Supported Child Care (SCC), a community-based family support program which works in partnership with other government and community services to include children with special needs in the broader child care system. The framework for SCC is philosophically grounded in principles which are to guide the transition process and be reflected in SCC once implemented. Rather than piloting this new approach, the Province chose to make the program shift over a period of four years (1995-99).

This report provides the results of a formative evaluation of the first fiscal year (1995/96) of the transition to SCC. It represents one component of a multi-faceted evaluation design.[1] The primary intent of this phase of the evaluation is to ensure that the "transition" is on track so that problems can be rectified early in the transition process.

To meet this objective, this report:

- describes this component of the Strategic Initiative as it has been implemented, both provincially and regionally; and,
- identifies strengths and weaknesses in both the program design and the transition process.

By so doing, factors which may impinge on the ability of the project to achieve its objectives are identified. In addition, as a summative evaluation of the transition to SCC is required, this report assesses the adequacy of systems design and reporting requirements.

Format

This report is presented in five sections.

Section One — Methods describes the manner in which the information was collected.

[1] See Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Research, Evaluation and Statistics Branch. *Supported Child Care Evaluation Framework Strategic Initiative #3* by MacKinnon, Kelly. Victoria, BC. No date.

Section Two — Background describes the process by which SCC became the framework for child care involving the families of children with special needs. In addition, it outlines the new SCC framework.

Section Three — Transition Components explores the status of the transition process focusing on those components with a provincial focus or responsibility.

Section Four — Regional Transition Status examines the regional status of the transition process.

Section Five — Conclusion provides a summary of the challenges facing the transition process based on the information gathered for this review.

SECTION ONE — METHODS

As this is a formative evaluation, its intent is to provide a description and assessment of program design and implementation. This review focuses primarily on the time period June 1, 1995, the approximate date at which the Strategic Initiative Agreement was signed, through March 1996. Three distinct methods of information gathering were used.

First, documentation was reviewed and existing data sources were accessed. This included:

- background reports on SNDC/SCC;
- job descriptions;
- quarterly reports and newsletters;
- terms of reference, membership listings, minutes, and products of the sub-committee on SCC and other related committees;
- policies, program descriptions, operational directives and other documentation; and,
- management information gathered by involved provincial ministries, for example, statistics on contracts, staffing, budget, expenditures, and progress reports.

Second, in-person interviews were conducted during February 1996 with a total of eight representatives of the five ministries who have major roles to play in the transition to SCC at the provincial level. Primarily, this included the members of the sub-committee on SCC. These interviews were semi-structured and developed to address the particular Ministry responsibility of each respondent.

Third, interviews were conducted with a total of fourteen representatives from the nine Ministry of Social Services (MSS) regions.[2] Due to differences in implementation and geography, some regions had more than one respondent. The respondent was either the responsible Area Manager and/or designated District Supervisor(s) or Social Worker(s). These interviews were also semi-structured. While the majority were completed via telephone, four were completed in-person. These interviews took place during March and April of 1996.

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2 The MSS retains responsibility for the administration and management of SNDC/SCC. Ministry staff have front line responsibility to work with communities to organize local procedures for making SCC a reality in BC.

Collectively, the information gathered via these distinct methods is used to describe and assess how well the transition process is proceeding.

SECTION TWO — BACKGROUND

This section describes the process by which SCC became the framework for child care involving the families of children with special needs. In addition, it outlines the new SCC framework.

The Decision Process

The organizational framework in which child care services for the families of children with special needs have historically been, and currently are, offered in BC is known as Special Needs Day Care (SNDC). Under this program, the child care needs of families of children with special needs are addressed primarily through the purchase of spaces at Child Development Centres, other specialized settings, and community day care programs.[3]

The decision to make the transition away from SNDC is rooted in a review of the program, a review initiated in response to both increasing demand and service delivery issues identified by parents, service providers, MSS staff, and various interested individuals and groups. The review began in 1990 with an informal committee of MSS field staff who identified a need to have both a clearer picture of what SNDC looked like as well as to consult parents prior to any changes to the manner in which the service was provided.

In the summer of 1991, service providers and social workers (serving close to 400 children receiving services under the program) were surveyed to determine the variety of settings in which SNDC was being delivered and the range of needs of the children being served.[4] The research identified disparities in service across the province. In particular, the hourly costs for providing service were found to vary widely and the cost was not necessarily related to the level of support/intervention required by the child or the setting. The research identified a lack of clarity in terms of the program's objectives and a lack of consistency in terms of practice issues relating to eligibility and income testing.

A consultation phase followed the research phase, through which feedback was obtained from families, service providers, community organizations, professionals, the academic community, and Ministry staff. A total of over 1300 people were heard from during the consultation process. *Special Needs Day*

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3 Funding for SNDC rests with the MWE while service delivery rests with the MSS.

4 See Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Research, Evaluation and Statistics Branch. *Special Needs Day Care Program: Report on Survey Results* by Cosgrove, Jean. Victoria, BC. April 1992.

Care: A Discussion Paper provided the framework for the discussion. The results of the consultation phase are contained in a separate document titled *Special Needs Day Care Review: A Summary of the Community Consultation Phase.*

In September 1992, the SNDC Reference Committee was appointed to recommend changes to the SNDC Program. The Reference Committee was comprised of parents, service providers, early childhood educators, and representatives from five provincial ministries. The Reference Committee reviewed the results of the research and consultation phases, and capitalized on the experiences of its members. In September 1993, the committee submitted its report, *Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia*, to the Minister of Social Services. Supported Child Care (SCC) was put forth as the title for the vision and framework to service delivery, presented by the Reference Committee in its report. The report was publicly released in December 1993.

The Government received considerable comments on the Reference Committee's report. A response to the SCC document was prepared and titled *The Government's Response to Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia*. Just before the release of the response, a kit was distributed to the Area Managers in the Province to assist them in the early stages of the transition. Among the material included in the kit were the response and a *Transition Guide*.[5] The *Transition Guide* "outlines the role of various Ministries in the transition period and contains some guidelines for field activities."[6] It also discussed the tools to be developed to support the transition and possible uses for transition funding.

The Government's response was more widely distributed about a week after the kits went out. While the Government tried "to balance the often divergent interests of parents, child care agencies, service providers and caregivers"[7], it generally supported the principles and vision presented by the SNDC Reference Committee. The Government endorsed making the transition from SNDC to a new program for the Province, known as SCC.

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5 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Division. *Towards Supported Child Care Transition Guide* . Victoria, BC. November 1994.

6 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Branch. *Response to Supported Child Care* . Victoria, BC. (E-mail) December 6, 1994.

7 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services and Ministry of Women's Equality. *The Government's Response to Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia,* p. 2. Victoria, BC: Queen's Printer for British Columbia. December 1994.

The SCC Framework

The proposed SCC framework is to be a program that is inclusive and stresses family-centred care, shared responsibility, and individual planning in providing the supports to enable children with special needs to participate in typical child care settings.

SCC is intended as a way to give parents of children with special needs the same options in child care as other parents. Children with special needs are to be incorporated into the broader child care system by increasing the supports to settings. The supports will include extra staffing, training, consultation, and other resources (such as equipment).

While the current SNDC program is generally provided at no cost to families, the SCC framework adopts a cost-shared approach. The costs of extra supports needed to successfully include children with special needs in the broader child care sector will be covered by the program, however parents will be expected to contribute to the cost of the child care spaces they access. In order to ensure that children with special needs are not denied early childhood education experience, all parents whose children have special needs will be eligible for a Special Needs Subsidy regardless of their income. Parents will be able to use it to offset the cost of a child care space in the program/setting of their choice. In addition, parents with low income may apply for a day care subsidy to assist with meeting the costs of the child care spaces they access.

Differing from the recommendations of the Reference Committee, the Province decided that eligibility for SNDC/SCC will continue to be based on documentation of a physical, communicative, emotional, intellectual, or behavioural handicap[8]. During the transition period, other approaches to establishing eligibility will be explored. A Support Guide will be developed to determine the supports needed by a child in order to participate successfully in a particular setting. It is hoped that it will fulfil a dual role by providing a process to assess the support needs of children and providers as well as to monitor the suitability of placements. If effective, the Support Guide may provide another means of determining eligibility.

The Province identified training of child care providers, early intervention specialists (for example, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, and Speech and Language Pathologists), and SCC consultants as an important component of SCC. It made a commitment to ensure that current child care providers across BC receive the support and improved access to training they need to adapt to a changing child care community and to continue to provide the safe and healthy environment children need not just to grow, but to thrive.

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8 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services. "Infant Devel opment Program", 3.2.2. In *Community Support Services Policy Manual*. Victoria, BC. No date.

The transition to SCC is funded under a Strategic Initiative Agreement between the Federal and Provincial Governments. As one of three components in the Child Care Strategic Initiative, the transition to SCC is intended to:

- improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of child care; and,
- create a more responsive, effective, efficient, and inclusive system for child care in BC.

Table 1 defines each of these terms as they relate to SCC.

Table 1: Definition of Terms

Accessibility is achieved when parents can purchase the child care services of their choice with ease. Accessibility is especially problematic for parents of children with special needs as there tend to be more limitations placed on the choices available and often they are restricted to specialized settings and/or placed in spaces purchased by the MSS under the existing SNDC program. SCC should improve the accessibility of child care through the introduction of the portable Special Needs Subsidy and through supporting child care settings and providers to provide inclusive child care.

Affordability is achieved when parents are able to purchase child care services they choose without compromising the family's financial viability. The new framework expects parents to contribute to the cost of the child care spaces they access. While this may seem to contradict improving affordability, parents with low income will be entitled to assistance under the existing Day Care Subsidy Program. In addition, all parents whose children have special needs will be eligible for the Special Needs Subsidy in order to ensure that a child with special needs does not miss out on early childhood education because of his or her family's financial situation. Government will continue to pay the costs of extra supports needed to include children with special needs in the broader child care sector.

Quality is defined as child care that meets both the needs of parents and the support needs of children. In terms of parent needs, quality child care is achieved when a parent is satisfied with the arrangement in terms of the factors which the parent has identified as important. Such factors may include: the location, the caregiver's approach, the caregiver's knowledge and skills, the ability/willingness of a setting to include all of the family's children that require child care, and the ability of a setting to consider a family's values.

Quality child care must also meet the support needs of children with special needs. The SCC framework addresses this first by trying to ensure that the supports required in order for a child to participate in a child care setting are made available and second, by making a Special Needs Subsidy available to ensure the developmental needs of children are addressed. Quality child care must also promote the health and well-being of these children.

A *responsive* system for children with special needs is defined by the application of the philosophical principles underlying SCC: it is inclusive and family-centred, it stresses shared responsibility, parental choice, and individual planning in providing the supports necessary to enable children with special needs to participate in child care.

SCC offers an opportunity to examine the *efficiency* of a framework for child care which is based on shared responsibility between families and government. It is anticipated that the new framework will allow more children to be served for the same amount of money or that the cost per child will decline as parents contribute to the cost of child care. The financial impact of SCC may also be in terms of staffing.

An *inclusive* child care system includes children who need extra support in the broader child care system — the ultimate goal underlying the transition.

The framework for the transition is based on co-ordination between five provincial ministries who each have roles to play in terms of making the transition a success, for example, addressing policy and funding issues, training issues, and labour adjustment issues. The five ministries and their respective roles/responsibilities follow:

The **Ministry of Women's Equality** (MWE) will ensure that the new SCC program is integrated into the broader child care sector and builds on components currently underway to strengthen the child care sector as a whole. The Ministry will also provide accessibility grants to assist community settings to include children with special needs.

The **Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors** (MOH) will continue to provide early intervention services and licensing for child care settings. As well, it will provide "partnership training" for professionals and early childhood educators.

The **Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour** (MSTL) will co-ordinate the expansion of formal training related to SCC through the public post-secondary system.

The **Ministry of Education** (MOE) will consult with school districts and other ministries to strengthen transition planning for children with special needs entering the school system.

The **Ministry of Social Services** (MSS) has the lead role in facilitating the transition process and retains responsibility for the administration and management of SNDC/SCC. Ministry staff will work with communities to organize local procedures for making SCC a reality in BC.

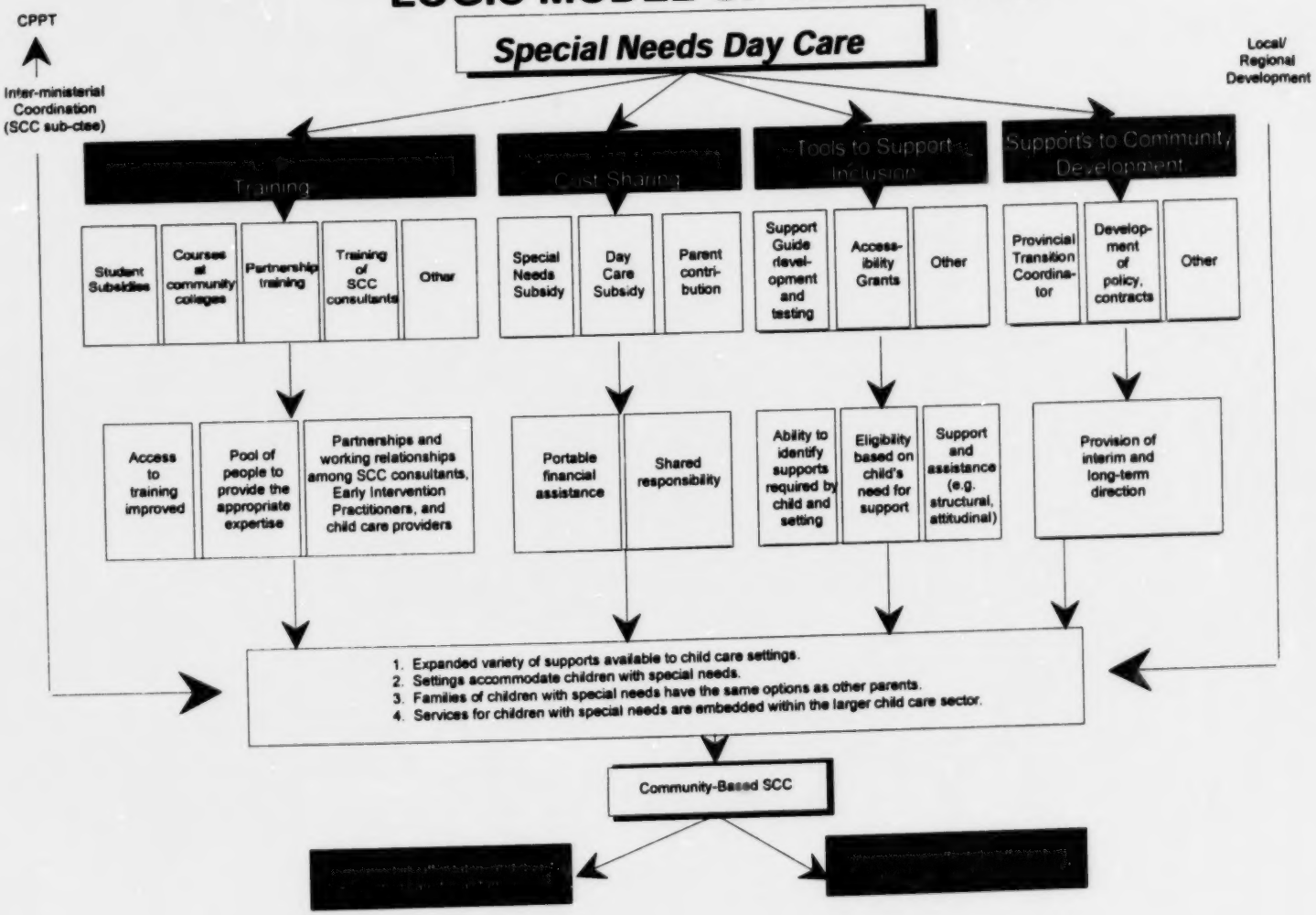
In addition, the **Child Care Policy Team**, chaired by the Deputy Minister of MWE, with representatives from the Ministries of Social Services, Finance, Health, Women's Equality, Education, and Skills, Training and Labour, will address all issues related to the child care field (including training, licensing, and funding).

Inter-ministerial co-ordination of activities is pivotal to a successful transition. Primary responsibility for this was delegated to the sub-committee on SCC, a sub-committee of the Child Care Policy Team.

Rather than piloting SCC, the Province chose to make the program shift over a period of four years (1995-99), taking a community development approach which would allow the transition to be a gradual evolutionary process with communities adopting the new framework over time and according to local needs.

The following page provides a logic model of the transition components which are viewed as critical to the achievement of the SCC vision by the end of the transition period.

LOGIC MODEL OF TRANSITION


CPPT
Inter-ministerial Coordination (SCC sub-ctee)
Special Needs Day Care
Local/ Regional Development
Training
Cost Sharing
Tools to Support Inclusion
Supports to Community Development
Student Subsidies
Courses at community colleges
Partnership training
Training of SCC consultants
Other
Special Needs Subsidy
Day Care Subsidy
Parent contri-bution
Support Guide devel-opment and testing
Access-ibility Grants
Other
Provincial Transition Coordina-tor
Develop-ment of policy, contracts
Other
Access to training improved
Pool of people to provide the appropriate expertise
Partnerships and working relationships among SCC consultants, Early Intervention Practitioners, and child care providers
Portable financial assistance
Shared responsibility
Ability to identify supports required by child and setting
Eligibility based on child's need for support
Support and assistance (e.g. structural, attitudinal)
Provision of interim and long-term direction
1. Expanded variety of supports available to child care settings.
2. Settings accommodate children with special needs.
3. Families of children with special needs have the same options as other parents.
4. Services for children with special needs are embedded within the larger child care sector.
Community-Based SCC

Summary

This section has documented the process by which SCC became the framework for child care involving the families of children with special needs. In addition, it outlined the SCC framework.

The SCC grew out of a lengthy process of research and consultation with stakeholders. As such, the framework has attempted to address the often divergent interests of parents, children, child care agencies, service providers, and caregivers. The SCC framework appears very consistent with the needs of the population. It targets the same population as its predecessor, the SNDC program, with eligibility continuing to be based on the presence of "handicapping conditions". Attention has been paid, in the development of the SCC framework, to both the support needs of children with special needs and to the child care needs of their families. The Government made only two major deviations from the recommendations of the SNDC Reference Committee who proposed the SCC framework. Both deviations were made following further consultation with stakeholders and were made in recognition of the often divergent interests of parents, child care agencies, service providers, and caregivers.

The transition to SCC is rather unique. In terms of design, it is not structured or defined to the extent many new endeavours are when undertaken on such a broad scale. SCC emphasizes principles and outcomes rather than emphasizing timelines and program or structural characteristics.

In addition, the Province chose to implement the transition to SCC as a program shift, rather than piloting this new delivery approach. The transition framework grants communities the freedom to evolve at their own pace and according to local needs while expecting the transition to be complete across the province by March 1999. Many centralized activities are seen as critical in supporting communities in moving towards SCC. Responsibility for these activities is split across several Ministries. As such, inter-ministerial co-ordination is pivotal. It is yet to be seen whether this "hands-off" approach will work. Clearly, it should yield diversity in what SCC looks like at the community level. It will be most interesting to see if this approach successfully addresses some of the concerns and issues with service delivery which are inherent in the SNDC program (such as inequities).[9]

[9] It should be noted that the information collected during the course of the review of SNDC will provide important comparative information for the summative evaluation of SCC.

SECTION THREE – TRANSITION COMPONENTS

According to the logic of the transition design, there are five major transition components[10]:

1. Inter-ministerial co-ordination;
2. Training;
3. Cost Sharing;
4. Tools to Support Inclusion; and,
5. Supports to Community Development.

Each of these component areas is broad, encompassing a variety of activities. Progress within each component area is seen as key to a successful transition from SNDC to SCC. This section examines progress in relation to each of the key transition components. Because the transition process is in its early stages, the focus is on progress to date.

The information in this section is presented in a consistent format. First, each transition component is described in terms of its purpose and intended progress. This is followed by what actually happened during the first fiscal year in relation to the component. Third, provincial respondent perspective on the role, intent, and/or progress of the transition component is presented. Fourth, the regional respondent perspective of the role, intent, and/or progress of the transition component is presented. Due to the differing roles played by the provincial and regional respondents in the transition process, the perspective of these parties is not consistently available.

Component 1 – Inter-ministerial coordination

Primary responsibility for inter-ministerial co-ordination rests with the SCC sub-committee, a working group under the direction of the Child Care Policy Team

10 An additional transition component "Local/Regional Development" is addressed in the next section of this report.

(CCPT). It was assembled to co-ordinate the transition from SNDC to SCC. Transition activities first identified in the *Terms of Reference* include[11]:

1. developing and monitoring a provincial transition plan and its budget;
2. overseeing the work of the provincial co-ordinator;
3. acting as the co-ordination point for communications activities and addressing issues on an inter-ministerial basis; and,
4. facilitating on-going communication and liaison with field staff and interested provincial groups and individuals.[12]

Membership was chosen to reflect the knowledge, roles, and expertise of the five different ministries playing a role in the transition process. Flexibility was allowed to recruit other members or guests as needed. The membership as it currently exists includes two representatives from MSTL[13], two representatives from MOH, one from MSS, one from MWE, and one from MOE. In addition, the committee has grown to include the provincial transition co-ordinator (PTC) as a member and an evaluation representative from Research, Evaluation, and Statistics, MSS, as a regular guest.

The representative from MSS was selected to chair the sub-committee. Communication and reporting to the CCPT have been achieved mainly by the chair of the sub-committee, who reports to the Assistant Director of Community Support Services, MSS (a member of the CCPT) and by an overlap in representation by the MWE.

The work of the SCC sub-committee commenced prior to the funding of the Strategic Initiative. Their initial activities included the development and discussion of a provincial transition work plan and budget for the period starting April 1995 and ending March 1999.[14] The work plan outlines the main components of the transition, tasks associated with them, and tentative start and

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11 The *Terms of Reference* outlines the responsibilities of the sub-committee members: *briefing their Ministry's representative on the CCPT; acting as their Ministry's key contact for SCC;* and, *seeking direction from their Ministry when appropriate* .

12 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Division. *Sub-committee on Supported Child Care Terms of Reference,* p. 1. Victoria, BC. January 1995.

13 Around the time the writing of this report was drawing to a close, the Ministry of Skills, Training, and Labour and the Ministry of Education combined to form the Ministry of Education, Skills, and Training (MEST). For the purpose of distinguishing between the separate responsibilities of the two ministries, and because this change occurred late in the time frame covered by this report, the two will be referred to as the separate ministries MSTL and MOE.

14 Among the first of the activities of the sub-committee was contracting the position for a provincial transition co- ordinator (PTC).

end dates. The budget estimates and outlines the dollars necessary for each component and task according to the ministry responsible for these funds.[15]

The members of the sub-committee convene once a month.[16] Prior to each meeting, an agenda and the minutes are sent to the members. The meetings run about two and a half hours in length and follow a regular schedule:

- ***Housekeeping***: A review of the agenda and minutes. Additional agenda items may be suggested at this point.
- ***Members Reports***: Each member of the sub-committee updates the others on their activity to date. A discussion of interwoven issues and agenda items often occur here as well.
- ***Agenda Items***: Items identified by the members as priority and in need of inter-ministerial discussion and/or decision are addressed here.
- ***Next Meetings***: Before members depart, the appointments for following meetings are reviewed and, if required, additional meetings are set.

Provincial respondents perceive the sub-committee as an effective and efficient vehicle for inter-ministerial co-ordination. They claimed that "the sub-committee has been valuable" and "has worked very well", explaining that the meetings usually involve a "robust discussion, making it a good forum for problem solving" and addressing inter-ministerial issues. In addition, they commended the action, commitment, management, co-operation, and co-ordination of the members of the SCC sub-committee.

Provincial respondents feel that it is a "coherent group" and each member is seen to play a vital role in the transition process. There has been some question by MOE representatives regarding their usefulness on the sub-committee. They feel as though the "machinery of the initiative is external to [them]" and that perhaps they should be used on an "as needed" basis or in an advisory capacity.[17] In the interviews, the remaining sub-committee members sympathized with the MOE and their position because the MOE is the only Ministry that is not directly funded for SCC activities and that does not have a clearly identified role. Nevertheless, members agree and stress that MOE's participation in the committee is critical. In fact, one member suggested that MOE representation may help to bridge the "biggest gap in the continuum of service" – long-term co-ordination.

The contracting of the PTC and this individual's membership on the committee has been described as a "great strength to the project". Also, the guest

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15 See Appendix A – *Funding*.

16 The meetings are generally scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month.

17 Based on their expertise in the transition to an inclusive setting.

attendance of a representative from MSS research was viewed as necessary to "be aware of what is happening" as the transition progresses. One hurdle, identified in the earlier progress of the committee, was that "staff turn-over at MWE has been high" resulting in "members from MWE chang[ing] frequently". Currently, however, the climate has settled and the representation from MWE "seems to be working better now".

Respondents who were sub-committee members agree that the SCC sub-committee is an efficient vehicle for managing activities at the provincial level. Specifically, they are pleased with the productivity and clarity of the meetings. For instance, the minutes taken have been described as clear and easy to follow, the "agenda is always there, and there are regular meetings with concrete issues to address". Much ground is covered in the two and a half hour time frame and members feel that "a lot of credit should be given to the chair for keeping the momentum going". The chair of the committee has been praised as "organized and committed to the cause".

Some people feel that an example has been set for others to follow: "Our inter-ministerial co-operation is now affecting co-operation in other agencies." One provincial respondent viewed this partnership between the ministries as no less than a landmark:

> *"I have never seen such co-ordination between the ministries since 1968."*

Component 2 — Training

One of the components around which ministries have had to co-ordinate their efforts is training. Different aspects of training are best served by the appropriate knowledge and expertise of a particular ministry. Thus, training has become a cross-ministry responsibility involving MSTL, MWE, MOH, and MSS.

Training of child care providers, early intervention specialists, SCC consultants, and other key individuals/agencies involved with SNDC/SCC will be an important determinant of the success of SCC. The need to educate and improve access to training has resulted in the development of a number of different training strategies. To date, strategies have included work on the following:

- community college-based courses;
- student subsidies;
- SCC consultant qualifications;[18]

[18] Although the initial logic chart developed for the transition placed the development of SCC Consultant Qualifications under *Community Development*, at this point in time they are clearly a training issue. In the long run, however, the development of SCC consultant qualifications and the training of SCC consultants are critical to community development.

- partnership training program; and,
- other training events.

Each will be addressed in turn.

Community College-Based Courses

One essential component of SCC is accessible training for child care providers which centres on introductory "special needs" education. Around the time of the release of *Supported Child Care,* the availability of such training in local BC colleges was found to be lacking. As a result, it became the responsibility of MSTL to fund BC Colleges, which provided Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Care, to provide additional Basic Introductory and Post-Basic courses that focus on children who require extra supports.[19] The course material was intended to target students studying child care as it relates to family and/or group settings. Accessibility to the courses was enhanced by the requirement that they include long distance options and that students be subsidized to participate.

On April 5, 1995, the representative from MSTL reported to the SCC sub-committee that letters had been sent to program directors of universities and colleges that provide ECE training. The letters requested the submission of proposals for the development of introductory ECE and Care courses that focused on children with "special needs". A list of expectations regarding course delivery, entrance criteria, and course credits was provided.[20] Some of these included:

- course offerings will be planned in consultation with key community stakeholders including Child Care Support Programs, parents, and individuals/agencies involved with provision of [SNDC/SCC] child care;
- course content will reflect the principles and philosophy outlined in the SCC report;
- planning will consider the needs of students in all of the regions served by the college;

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19 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Supp ort Services Division. *Towards Supported Child Care Transition Guide,* p. 6. Victoria, BC. November 1994.

20 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Skills, Training, and Labour. *Letter to College Heads requesting proposals for course development funding* by Campbell, Jean, pp. 2–3. Victoria, BC. March 1995.

- students seeking training on a non-credit basis will have access to courses, whether or not they meet post basic or diploma program entrance criteria; and,
- in communities where local supported child care transition planning process has already begun, liaison with that process will occur.

Most of the 16 institutions to which letters were sent expressed an interest, however, many were delayed in submitting a proposal due to the time of year and need for local consultation. The deadline for submission was thus extended.

Eventually, many creative proposals, such as modularized workshop-type courses and interactive video, were submitted. With such avid interest it became a challenge to choose which proposals would be funded for the first year. Therefore, the representative for MSTL consulted with the PTC who was in the best position to discuss where individual communities were at in terms of SCC. Together they were able to ensure that before an institution received funding, the communities they served were ready for such courses. This process assisted the MSTL in deciding what colleges would be funded in the first year of the SCC transition.

By July 1995, the funds[21] were sent to eight institutions: Capilano College, Douglas College, Malaspina College, North Island College, Northern Lights College, Northwest Community College, Selkirk College, and the University College of the Fraser Valley. Each received less than they had requested, however, there was no apparent dispute with the allocations. Since that time, two additional institutions have been funded to provide courses; Okanagan Community College and Kwantlen College – and the University of Victoria has been funded to provide distance education. Two others, New Caledonia and Vancouver Community College, were within weeks of receiving funding. The remaining colleges have not yet offered a proposal.

Additional feedback is to be provided to the MSTL when they receive year-end reports from funded colleges. Reports will include information on the planning process undertaken, the course statistics,[22] student participation/outcomes, student subsidy expenditures, overall 1995/96 expenditures, and 1996/97 SCC course proposal. These year-end reports from the colleges are due May 31, 1996. Results are to be compiled and forwarded to the SCC sub-committee.

Provincial respondents were pleased with the enthusiasm and creativity with which community colleges responded to the request for proposals (RFP). They had received a "positive reaction from the colleges, even after having to deal with rather stringent criteria for program development".

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21 The dollar amounts allocated to each institution can be found in Table 2 on page 21.

22 Such as hours offered, locations, and costs.

Whether the expectations were considered "stringent" or not, it was apparent that provincial respondents believed these expectations necessary and beneficial. For example, one provincial respondent explained that "colleges are required to utilize the community institutions...and have them assist in teaching", thus, gaining from their expertise. Provincial respondents also considered some of the expectations for course development "innovative", for example, students may take a course "as non-credit now, then apply it as credit in the future if desired".

The only concern raised by one provincial respondent, was that there is "no formal college network to brainstorm around course content and issues".

Regional respondents reported a lack of communication and involvement of college staff regarding local SCC transition activities and college course development. They were "not impressed with the information flow" and found the lack of involvement "disappointing". One regional respondent explained:

> *"I only found out about the course offerings at the community college by accident."*

This suggests that the expectation, outlined in the original RFP, regarding community consultation on course offerings was not consistently met. Similarly, regional respondents noted that college attendance at local steering committee meetings was either "weak" or non-existent, yet it is an expectation of the colleges to liaise with the local SCC transition process. Also, some regional respondents offered suggestions, concerning the development of college-based courses, that virtually mirrored the aforementioned expectations:

> "*It would have been valuable for the college to have consulted with the MSS office prior to development and implementation of the courses."*

These examples lend support to the possibility that not only had colleges not consistently met each expectation, but regional respondents were oft times unaware of the content or existence of the letter which requested proposals from the colleges. In addition to the lack of communication from the involved community colleges, regional respondents stated that communication between MSTL headquarters and regional staff "is not evident".

During the interviews with regional respondents it was pointed out that some college day cares had not yet developed inclusive child care settings, but were funded to educate students in SCC. With no apparent provincial influence in this area, it appears that this recommendation of the SNDC Reference Committee[23] has not yet been attended to. Regional participants suggested that the practice

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23 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services. *Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia* by Special Needs Day Care Reference Committee, p. 41. Victoria, BC: Queens Printer for British Columbia. September 1993.

of SCC and adoption of SCC principles could be a new and distinct expectation for the colleges.

Student Subsidies

As well as the provision of funds to colleges for course development, it is also the responsibility of the MSTL to subsidize students to attend these courses; thus, allowing the training to be more accessible. In the letter which the MSTL sent requesting proposals for the development of college courses, the provision of student subsidies was addressed:

> *"Students experiencing financial difficulty...may be able to apply for special financial assistance..."*

Details were to be provided upon project approval for they had not yet been formalized.

In a meeting in August 1995, after the initial decisions regarding the allocation of course development funds, the SCC sub-committee discussed the manner in which student subsidies could be implemented. Once informed of the roles of colleges and student financial aid personnel in distributing funds, the members agreed on guidelines[24] for the distribution of the student subsidy:

- no requirement for needs/income testing;
- no difference in allocation between credit and non-credit students;
- no difference in allocation based on student type;
- funds to be used to subsidize direct costs for students – tuition, etc.; and,
- requirement for institutions to report back regarding usage of funds.

Colleges approved for first-year course funding received a letter that presented these guidelines and the SCC sub-committee's position regarding the student subsidy. Colleges were to work out the best method for the distribution of student subsidy funds, within the parameters of the guidelines, then present their ideas for approval.

Some examples of the distribution ideas which were presented by colleges and approved include: providing funds for distance students to stay in residence for intensive course offerings, subsidizing parents' caregiver/baby-sitting costs to

[24] Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Division. *Sub-Committee on Supported Child Care: Minutes*, p. 5. Victoria, BC. August 2, 1995.

enable both parents to attend, and assisting caregivers by providing pay for substitute caregivers.

Student subsidies were calculated according to 10% of funds originally awarded to colleges. The colleges, training funds awarded, and student subsidy amounts follow:

Table 2: MSTL Funds Allocated to Colleges as of April 1996

COLLEGE	TRAINING	STUDENT SUBSIDY
Capilano College	$35,000	$3500
College of New Caledonia	$38,000	$4000
Douglas College	$37,000	$3500
Malaspina College	$25,000	$2500
North Island College	$85,000	$8500
Northern Lights College	$85,000	$8500
Northwest Community College	$95,000	$9,500
Okanagan University College	$10,000	$1,000
Kwantlen College	$20,000	$2,000
Selkirk College	$30,000	$3,000
University College of the Fraser Valley	$35,000	$3,500
University of Victoria	$85,000	$8,500
Vancouver Community College	$20,000	$2,000
Total Funding	$600,000	$60,000

The proposals on the delivery of subsidies to students were considered "innovative" by provincial respondents. Respondents who were sub-committee members were supportive of the plans developed at the local level, as long as they were within the guidelines. On the whole, provincial respondents recognized that "this is already a low paid industry" and their main concern was that there be no further barriers to education in this area.

Because there has been "little communication" from colleges and MSTL headquarters to the communities they serve, regional respondents knew little, if any, information about the availability of student subsidies. In fact, when discussing college courses, one of the complaints was that "staff can't afford to take the training". This comment supports the suggestion that regional respondents were largely unaware of the student subsidy.

SCC Consultant Qualifications

In the report, *Supported Child Care*, the SNDC Reference Committee presented 24 recommendations. One of these recommendations, presented as the responsibility of MSTL, suggested the development of a

> *new qualification [which] would build on the existing child care training programs and other competencies, and qualify someone to provide the consultative services envisioned for the Supported Child Care program.*[25]

In response to this, MSTL suggested that additional research pertaining to consultative services was necessary. Specifically, MSTL proposed a project that would:

1. determine the training requirements for a qualified consultant; and,
2. search for existing courses or materials which may duplicate, or assist in, training.

The fall of 1995 saw the development of an RFP, incorporating revisions suggested by the inter-ministerial sub-committee members. By December, the MSTL had distributed a call for proposals titled, *Needs Analysis: Provision of Consultative Services in Supported Child Care.*[26] An advisory committee was to be set up to provide direction to the contracted institution or organization. The membership, to be selected by MSTL and the SCC sub-committee, would consist of SCC consultants, early childhood educators, Early Intervention specialists, Infant Development Program staff, involved ministries, and other key organizations. The final objectives of the project, outlined in the RFP, included:

- determining the values, knowledge and skill sets required for a SCC Consultant;
- reviewing relevant training qualification mechanisms available;
- identifying training gaps; and,

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25 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services. *Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia* by Special Needs Day Care Reference Committee, p. 41. Victoria, BC: Queens Printer for British Columbia. September 1993.

26 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour. *Call for Proposals; Needs Analysis: Provision of Consultative Services in Supported Child Care* . Victoria, BC. (Request for Proposals for the Development of SCC Consultant Qualifications). 1995.

- presenting models to address identified gaps and strategies to ensure qualified individuals are available to fill consultative roles.

In February 1996, the Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development let a contract to Camosun College to undertake the project. Responsibility for overseeing the content and product of the contract will be maintained by an advisory committee, which includes members from the SCC sub-committee. It is estimated that the needs analysis will be completed in August 1996, taking 2-3 months longer than originally planned.

Partnership Training Program

The MOH is responsible for the development and delivery of the Partnership Training Program (PTP). The purpose of the PTP is to create on-going partnerships within the community and to present a variety of skills and techniques that can be utilized to enhance the developmental environments for children who require extra support. The PTP includes a series of training packages, each targeting a specific area of support.

One of the training packages, Speech and Language, was completed and successfully implemented in 1991, prior to the Strategic Initiative Agreement. This package was to be revised to include the principles of SCC and then be used as a model for the other four. These packages were to be based on four, identified, essential topics concerning children who require extra support:

1. Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy;
2. Behaviour Management;
3. Family-Centred Care and Family Support; and,
4. Special Health Care Supports.

As with the delivery of the Speech and Language package, the intended sequence of events to be followed when a community is ready for partnership training will begin with the teams who developed the training packages. The teams will go into a community and train a group of facilitators[27] in the background material and use of the package. The facilitators will then present a course to child care providers and parents in the community who choose to attend. It is hoped that

[27] The group of facilitators will consist of one specialized person (such as a n Occupational Therapist), an early childhood educator, and/or a parent.

...in this way, parents and early childhood educators are matched with therapists to create ongoing partnerships within the community.[28]

An attempt will be made to offer the sessions in the evenings or on weekends, when it is easier for parents or working people to attend.

Contracts to develop training packages reflecting the four topics were to be undertaken during the 1995/96 year with two month pilot testing and revisions planned for the beginning of the 1996/97 year. During the pilot testing, each package will be delivered by the facilitators who will provide feedback and conduct student evaluations. Once the pilot projects are complete, a presentation will be held, for an advisory group, on how the packages worked in their pilot. The advisors will then have an opportunity to comment.

MOH contracted with the Vancouver Neurological Centre for the production of materials necessary for the training packages: Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, Family-Centred Care and Family Support, and Special Health Care Supports. Teams, consisting of MOH staff and a project co-ordinator, were established around each topic to develop the corresponding training package. In addition, a group of advisors was set up to offer comments on the development of these packages. The first meetings of the teams to begin the development of the PTP were held in May 1995.

The process undertaken for the development of the Behaviour Management package was different. Unlike the other packages, there was no established approach with which to begin development. MOH contracted with the BC Council of the Family because of this agency's expertise in the development of materials relating to child development and management. As with the other packages, a project co-ordinator was hired and a training team was established. However, the project co-ordinator also established a separate advisory committee to comment solely on the development of the Behaviour Management package.

In September 1995, a "training link day" brought together all the teams to discuss progress and ensure co-ordination of content and plans. At this point, draft outlines for each package had been produced and the teams had begun to develop course materials. Each outline proposed anywhere from five to eight sessions (also called modules or topics) that were approximately two to three hours in length.

Throughout the year 1995/96, work on the PTP progressed substantially and an additional package, Partnerships in Supporting Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, was beginning development. The Speech and Language package was updated to reflect the principles of SCC and continues to be used throughout the

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28 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Health. "Overview for Partnership Program", Resources and Definitions 12, pp.1 –2. In Gay, Chris (ed.) *How to Get There...A Transition Handbook to Supported Child Care* . Victoria, BC. 1996.

Province. Packages for Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, Family-Centred Care and Family Support, and Special Health Care Supports, were in draft form before the end of March 1996 and ready for distribution to pilot communities within a couple of months. Work on the Behaviour Management package (now renamed Challenging Behaviours) continues and will not be piloted until about September 1996.

Speech and Language has been described by provincial respondents as "a great success". Thus, in their opinion, this package turned out to be an excellent prototype for the training packages that followed. In fact, provincial respondents were "amazed at how smooth the implementation of these partnerships has gone" and felt "lucky to have [had] the prototype in place". Provincial respondents did, however, comment on a few difficulties regarding the Challenging Behaviours package. The process was slightly more complex for it involved trying

> *to establish consensus among key players concerning the approach to be taken and content to be included.*

The advisory group for this package was commended for their "valuable input" in this regard. Although the Challenging Behaviours package seems to have been more difficult to plan for, the comments of the outcomes so far are positive. Provincial respondents feel "fortunate to have the contractor that [they] do – a professional in the mental handicap and early childhood system".

Other Training Events

The transition process to SCC allowed for outside training events, such as orientation and in-service training, to be delivered by the involved Ministries. In the first year of the transition two main events emerged as part of this effort. First, development began on a SCC Early Intervention stream to be delivered at the annual Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECE BC) Conference in May 1996. Second, the *Supported Child Care Joint Training Session* was held in March 1996.

The joint training event emerged from a perceived need to focus on collaboration and joint training opportunities between Child Care Support Program (CCSP) staff and SCC consultants. When first discussing the use of training dollars, the members of the sub-committee agreed that the dollars would be well spent on enhancing the link between these two groups. The groups were important support systems that had several qualities uniting them, including their common goal to support "collaborative and inclusive child care".[29]

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[29] Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Women's Equality, Child Care Branch. *Supported Child Care Joint Training Session For Child Care Support Programs (CCSP)*

Registration packages for the training were developed and distributed by the beginning of February 1996. One staff member from each CCSP and each SCC program in the province were funded to attend, however, some unfunded seats remained for additional staff who wished to participate. Registration was cut off at 130.

As the communities became aware of the joint training, many expressed reservations concerning its target group. Much of the feedback received by the sub-committee suggested that communities believed the event "preempted local decisions about who will provide SCC services".[30] Communities felt that the training should more appropriately target local/regional steering committee members. Alternatively, the sub-committee members felt that confusion existed as to the nature of the training and were clear amongst themselves that the training was to be practice-oriented, rather than planning-oriented. They decided to proceed with the joint training and agreed that any further in-service events would involve consultation with field staff and local/regional steering committees. Also, the sub-committee acknowledged that it may be necessary to look into other ways of delivering planning-oriented training.

The training took place over three days and was broken down into three sessions:

- ***session 1***: to provide practical skills to support the transition to inclusive child care;
- ***session 2***: to provide awareness and knowledge of the principles of SCC; and,
- ***working session***: to generally strengthen child care consultation skills.

Each session was conducted by different key-note speakers from Ohio, Ontario, and BC.

Feedback[31] regarding sessions 1 and 2 was mixed. Generally the respondents of the training thought "the presenters were excellent", however, the content of the sessions was no more than a review:

> *"I didn't come away with anything that I either haven't heard or done before."*

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and Supported Child Care Consultants (SCCC) . Victoria, BC. (Training Package). March, 1996.

30 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Division. *Sub-Committee on Supported Child Care: Minutes,* p. 3. Victoria, BC. February 7, 1996.

31 All of the following comments and information in this section were derived from returned feedback forms which accompanied the Joint-Training registration package.

While some felt that "it is always good to have a refresher course", others "found it very basic" and would have enjoyed a component of "where do we go from here". People suggested that the material may be more useful to other groups – such as service providers to help "better their programs" or first year students studying early childhood or "special needs". Nevertheless, a number of respondents in the joint training found the presentations very informative:

> *"I am new to SCC having spent nine years in a preschool classroom. The session helped me to understand the focus of SCC better and how I can operate more effectively."*

Generally, respondents of the joint training were most impressed with the working session which "directly related to [their] issues, needs, concerns, and future". This session allowed them to ask questions of the speakers and discuss common issues and solutions. They were excited about the networking and planning opportunities of the session and remarked that it gave "a sense of direction". Respondents in the joint training were aware of "a wealth of information in the room that [they] only started to share". They were, therefore, frustrated that more time was not allowed for the working session:

> *"I wished we could have done this the first morning we were together...this should have been the main focus for the two and a half days."*

Respondents were so impressed with the working session that they felt it would be useful to apply "this format to look at more issues regarding SCC" and suggested that perhaps "planning sessions should be on-going in the community".

Component 3 – Cost-sharing

While the SNDC program is generally provided at no cost to families, the new framework expects parents and government to share the expense of child care. Under this new framework, the government will be responsible for funding the extra supports (such as consultation, staffing, and structural changes) that a child care setting will need to include a child. Parents of children who require extra support will be expected to pay the basic fee for child care, however, they may apply for assistance under the Provincial Day Care Subsidy program. In addition, a Special Needs Subsidy will be available, regardless of their income.

The Special Needs Subsidy was not among the recommendations presented in the *Supported Child Care* report. In fact, it is here that the government's response made a significant departure from the suggestions of the SNDC Reference Committee:

"In recognition of the vital importance of early intervention and education in the years before school and the costs of raising a child with special needs, all parents of children who meet the Supported Child Care Program criteria for extra support will be eligible for a special needs subsidy...[32]*"*

Both income-testing and the Special Needs Subsidy were to be implemented in the Fall of 1995.

Discussions held in the spring, 1995, led to a sub-committee decision to request from the CCPT a delay in the implementation of income-testing and the Special Needs Subsidy. Members of the sub-committee were aware of the sensitivity of this area and the disparities that existed in the province concerning the delivery of assistance. They wished to carry out further research regarding the impact of this change and to create some ideas on how best to implement cost-sharing.

Consequently, April 1996 became the new goal for this implementation. MSS set to work on estimating cost impact/budget needs, developing a work plan to review with the field, and establishing new expenditure lines for SCC. By July 1995, a MSS Special Needs Subsidy Policy draft paper was distributed to the sub-committee members for feedback.

In November 1995, MSS reported that research, as discussed previously, had been initiated. A contract had been let for a financial impact analysis of options for implementing income-testing and the Special Needs Subsidy. The resulting paper was completed in January 1996 and titled *Report on the Income Testing and Sharing-Costs Provisions of Supported Child Care*.[33] The report provided

- a description of the existing SNDC Program;
- the context within which policy changes would occur;
- the income-testing practices in some areas of the province at that time; and,
- the issues needing resolution.

In addition, it presented options for implementation, including pros and cons for each, to be considered by MSS and the CCPT. The report also suggested that "it would be very difficult to fully implement income-testing and cost-sharing on

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32 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services and Ministry of Women's Equality. *The Government's Response to Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia,* p. 11. Victoria, BC: Queen's Printer for British Columbia. December 1994.

33 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Service Division. *Report on the Income Testing and Sharing-Costs Provisions of Supported Child Care* by Beach, Jane. Victoria, BC. January 1996.

April 1, 1996. Communities are at different stages of acceptance of development of Supported Child Care..."[34]

After reviewing the document, MSS Area Managers and the CCPT expressed a preference for a 'phased-in' approach to both income-testing and the Special Needs Subsidy, thereby "coincid[ing] with the transition to a SCC model on a local community basis". When the sub-committee discussed the practical implications of this approach concerns were expressed about compounding the inequity of delivery within the province and this impact on the anxiety and confusion within the communities. One sub-committee member explained:

> *"It's confusing for parents – they wonder if they'll have to pay. It depends on where they live whether they'll have to pay."*

Nevertheless, the sub-committee decided that the phased-in approach was the best of the available options in spite of these implications. By April 1996, the Ministers of Women's Equality and Social Services had approved the phasing in of income-testing and the Special Needs Subsidy. Policy development around this was to begin immediately and implementation in the first set of communities was to begin in the fall of 1996.

Generally, regional respondents were critical of the Province's approach to implementing cost sharing. They were critical of the length of time it took for the "decision-makers" to make a decision about how to proceed with cost-sharing and of the failure to be more directive in the interim. They criticized the process for being "very slow on clarification and in the writing of procedures". Regional respondents explained that community members do not understand the "mechanics of when, how, and who will income test", resulting in unnecessary anxiety and confusion. It is apparent from the interviews that regional respondents feel clarification of cost-sharing is necessary and "policy direction is needed quickly".

Furthermore, in a teleconference, held by the PTC, a number of regional stakeholders were informed of the provincial decision to have cost-sharing implemented as the communities are ready. Some of these respondents seemed uncomfortable with this decision:

> *"[We] need a clear start date and guidelines...there's too much soft pedaling in this area."*

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34 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Service Division. *Report on the Income Testing and Sharing-Costs Provisions of Supported Child Care* by Beach, Jane, p. 33. Victoria, BC. January 1996.

Component 4 – Tools to support inclusion

The logic model identifies an up front need for tools to support the transition to an inclusive approach to child care involving children with special needs. At this point, three tools have been identified: 1) Support Guide; 2) Accessibility Grants; and 3) revisions to Child Care Regulations. Each will be addressed in turn.

The Support Guide

In *Supported Child Care*, the reference committee recommended that a support checklist be used to:

1. determine a child's eligibility for SCC; and,
2. identify the range of needs required to support a child.

It was hoped that by following this route a requirement for a "diagnosis" of the child could be avoided. However, a report examining existing support evaluation instruments, *Towards a Checklist for Supported Child Care*, noted that none of the instruments fulfilled the functional specifications and philosophical criteria required by the SNDC Reference Committee. As a result, the *Government's Response*, completed the following year, stated:

> *"While we agree that it is better to look at a child's abilities rather than disabilities, we are not yet sure how we can determine eligibility fairly without a diagnosis – there is no proven model.*[35]*"*

It was decided that eligibility would continue to be determined through documentation of "handicapping conditions" and a Support Guide would be developed to help identify the range of needs required to support a child.

This Support Guide became the responsibility of the PTC who was to develop it "in collaboration with the affected stakeholders and ministries."[36] Consequently, a Support Guide committee of five SCC consultants was established to work with the PTC. Each member of the Support Guide committee represents a different geographic region of the province, has several years experience, and has good relations with his/her community partners. Their duties were to:

- assist in the development of a draft report of the Support Guide; and,

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35 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services and Ministry of Women's Equality. *The Government's Response to Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia*, p. 13. Victoria, BC: Queen's Printer for British Columbia. December 1994.

36 Province of British Columbia. *Schedule "A": Services*. (Job Description for the PTC). No date.

- later educate other SCC consultants in their region on the use of the Guide.

Development of the Support Guide began in the summer of 1995. The initial work of the committee was to draw together a list of criteria[37] which were considered crucial to the Support Guide. Some of these were identified in *Towards a Checklist for Supported Child Care*; others, by the members of the Support Guide committee. By the fall, the first draft report of the Support Guide was available for review and comment. Copies were distributed to individuals representing various stakeholders within the community: parents, typical and specialized child care providers, social workers, CDC, CCSP, and IDP staff, licensing officers, the deaf community, and other SCC consultants. In addition, the Support Guide was delivered to the members of the SCC sub-committee for comment. The PTC requested that initial recipients of the guide be generous in its subsequent distribution.

Considerable feedback on the Support Guide was received and incorporated into the February 1996 version. The most radical change as a whole was in the clarification, organization, and coherence of the sections — as opposed to the content. Descriptive titles were added or changed where the content may, at points, have been vague. Also, the February version more clearly identifies who is to complete each section. This draft was organized into five sections:

1. Background Information;
2. Child Information;
3. Child Care Setting Information;
4. Support Schedule; and,
5. Support Summary.

As envisioned, use of the Support Guide is to involve a team consisting of a parent, the child care provider, and a SCC consultant. The consultant will act as co-ordinator and liaison for the team. When complete, the information collected and agreed upon by the team is to be submitted to a Social Worker to approve funding.

Three months of field testing the latest version is planned, including a review of the Support Guide by community SCC Steering Committees. Revisions and refinement of the Support Guide are expected to continue over the four year transition to SCC.

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37 See Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Division. *Supported Child Care: Support Guide* by Gay, Chris, pp. 9–10. (Draft). Victoria, BC. 1996 for a more detailed description of the criteria.

Provincial respondents admitted that the process involved in the development of the Support Guide has been difficult and they identified two possible reasons:

1. an in-depth survey of available literature "provided little material for duplication or moulding"; and,

2. the development of the Support Guide is a process that includes "trying to marry many users' needs in one document".

The latter is exemplified by attempts to include "user-friendly language for the parents, the ECE population, as well as medical assessment language". This is also reflected in the feedback received regarding the representation of the membership on the support guide committee. For instance, some of the feedback suggests that this committee "needs to include non-Supported Child Care people and pull the therapeutic element into the committee." Because the report tries to address so "many users' needs", provincial respondents anticipate that not everyone will be completely satisfied with the Guide.

Much of the feedback received by the persons working on the guide seems to have been very useful. They report that "readers have identified gaps, where training is required, and where roles needed defining". The Support Guide is still in the process of its development and, in fact, "will probably take the full term of the SCC project to create a final [copy]". Provincial respondents are optimistic that the Support Guide will eventually be useful in determining the supports required and perhaps, ideally, in determining eligibility for SCC — especially when people are trained in the use of the Guide and it is applied in practical situations.

Most of the regional comments concerning the Support Guide were positive. Everyone seemed aware of the Guide and many had seen a copy. Communication was not an apparent issue, in fact, regional respondents were informed enough to be able to comment that they "agree with the process" involved in the creation of the Guide. They were pleased with the input sought from the various stakeholders and liked the idea of using a pilot community. They also commented that the Support Guide committee "worked very quickly at putting it together; it looks good".

Accessibility Grants

Physical access is necessary to include children who require extra supports in the typical child care sector. Thus, the SNDC Reference Committee recommended that

> *"design guidelines developed for child care expansion initiatives ensure that new and renovated buildings being*

used for child care are physically accessible for all children, and provide devices so as to be as accessible as possible.[38]"

As reported under *Shared Costs*, the government was to cover the expense of extra support (such as structural changes) required by a child care setting. Accessibility grants would be one way for the government to provide this support. *Towards Supported Child Care: Transition Guide* explains that the grants would be provided through the existing Facilities and Equipment Program until 1998/99 and that they would be used to meet the physical supports outlined by the SNDC Reference Committee. The basic framework for Accessibility Grants was to be established by MWE during the 1995/96 year and in place by April 1, 1996.

It was decided early in the development of accessibility grants that they would encompass "mental barriers" as well as physical barriers to inclusion. This concern was also reflected in the recommendations of the SNDC Reference Committee:

> *"One element of quality should be effective inclusion of all children as reflected in areas such as staff attitude...*[39]"

Planning for the development of the grants did not begin until fall, 1995, when a working group was formed called the Accessibility Grants Initiative Ad Hoc committee. The purpose of this committee was to define the grants, what they would involve, and how they would fit with SCC and/or existing grant initiatives.

Development of the criteria and procedures for the accessibility grants began in November, when the working committee met for the first time.[40] The minutes of this and subsequent meetings were circulated to the members of the SCC sub-committee. After receiving the minutes of the first Ad Hoc committee meeting, the members of the SCC sub-committee discussed the grant on an inter-ministerial level and came up with several key points for consideration:

- focus on staff training and supports – rather than "bricks and mortar";
- where training is being covered, the intent...should be to enable the respondent to attend;

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38 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services. *Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia* by Special Needs Day Care Reference Committee, p. 41. Victoria, BC: Queens Printer for British Columbia. September 1993.

39 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services. *Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia* by Special Needs Day Care Reference Committee, p. 40. Victoria, BC: Queens Printer for British Columbia. September 1993.

40 Issues discussed included funding and budget issues, evaluation, the definition of accessibility grants, and criteria for eligibility. Province of British Columbia Ministry of Women's Equality. *CCR/SI Accessibility Grants Ad Hoc Committee Meeting* . Victoria, BC. (Minutes). November 23, 1995.

- take care not to overlap with the training/staff-support role of Supported Child Care consultants;
- ensure that applicants have exhausted other avenues of funding;
- [require] applicants to have affiliation with Supported Child Care program or CCSP where they exist;
- include FDC (family day care), private operators, and LNR (license not required) settings; and,
- pursue the idea of a loan program for larger capital [in] partnership with an organization such as Van City.41

By January 1996, the Ad Hoc committee completed a draft policy and procedures piece, titled *Accessibility Grants Initiative*. The document highlights how accessibility grants fit in with the objectives of the Federal/Provincial Strategic Initiative to "improve accessibility, affordability, and quality" of services and to ensure a more "inclusive system for child care". The following items that may create a barrier to accessibility and inclusiveness were identified:

1. physical/structural barriers;
2. equipment or programming barriers; and,
3. information and knowledge of Supported Child Care.[42]

Activities which would be considered for funding fell under at least one of these three barriers. The *Accessibility Grants Initiative* also outlines and details what Accessibility Grants should look like around procedures such as applying for a grant and awarding, reviewing, paying, and monitoring a grant.

The draft was circulated among the SCC sub-committee members who decided that a wider distribution of the next draft, to involve SCC planning/steering committees, was necessary. In addition, the sub-committee discussed different options for delivery of accessibility grants. The options included:

1. local committees give advice to MWE on each application;
2. local committees provide a list of prioritized applicants to MWE; and,
3. grants delivered locally via MSS Area Managers or a non-profit society.

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41 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Division. *Sub-Committee on Supported Child Care: Minutes,* pp. 2–3. Victoria, BC. December 6, 1995.

42 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Women's Equality. "Accessibility Grants Initiative", p. 1. In *Child Care Branch Policy Manual.* Victoria, BC. (Draft). 1996.

An option was not chosen, although, concerns with practicality were expressed in regard to the third suggestion.

The sub-committee decided "to delay implementation of these grants until part way through the next fiscal year, in order to ensure adequate consultation"[43] regarding the options and, more generally, the development of the grants.

Provincial respondents[44] seem quite sure that Accessibility Grants will not be in effect by April 1996. As with the Support Guide, this grant is essentially being created from the ground up, therefore, provincial respondents feel that it is vital to include the communities in defining Accessibility Grants. This, however, takes time and the Accessibility Grants Ad Hoc committee recognizes that it "can't proceed any more with eligibility, financial qualifications, etc. until the steering committees provide information regarding what Accessibility Grants should look like". Apparently the MWE has been receiving some feedback from the regions who are concerned that they had not been informed of the Accessibility Grants sooner:

> *"The communities and staff there are anxious for more information...[but] there are no grants yet – we are just collecting feedback about ideas this month."* [February – 1996].

Provincial respondents emphasize that time is necessary to ensure that "thoughtful plans" are made concerning how the money will be spent in the communities.

Child Care Regulation Revisions

The Child Care Regulation (CCR) Review Committee was established in April 1992 by the MOH's Community Care Facilities Branch. The mandate of the committee was to review the Community Care Facility Act and the CCR to ensure that they would allow "the expansion of quality, affordable, accessible child care".[45] The result of their work was a number of intent statements, or revisions to CCR. During the development of these intent statements, the SNDC Reference Committee requested "that the review of the Child Care Regulation currently underway consider the vision of [the SCC] report and that the two

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43 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Commun ity Support Services Division. *Sub-Committee on Supported Child Care: Minutes,* p. 2. Victoria, BC. February 27, 1996.

44 Regional respondents were not directly questioned about accessibility grants, nevertheless, some noted the lack of clarity around this activity.

45 Province of British Columbia, quoted in Province of British Columbia. "Executive Summary – Overview", p. 1. In *Analysis of "Child Care Regulation Review Working Document"* by Perrin, et al. Victoria, BC. May 29, 1996.

processes continue to be co-ordinated".[46] The *Government's Response* reported that this communication was initiated. In fact, the CCR Review Committee had consulted with the SNDC Reference Committee and

> *agrees in principle with the philosophy of inclusion, and the idea of effective inclusion forms an integral part of its recommendations dealing with space, staff qualifications, group size and staff-to-child-ratio.*

Proposed revisions to the CCR include eliminating the Special Needs Day Care License, revising terminology to reflect children who require supports, reviewing the quality standards to be implemented in all child care settings, establishing quality indicators to determine service settings, establishing guidelines for behavioural management, and requiring licensed child cares to have a behavioural management policy.

The CCPT and the Provincial Child Care Council examined the proposed revisions of the CCR Review Committee and decided that it was necessary to proceed with an in-depth analysis of the impact of these recommendations on cost, policy, and legislation. The findings were reported in *Analysis of "Child Care Regulation Review Working Document"*[47] in May of 1996.

Component 5 – Supports to community development

As previously indicated, the Province granted communities the freedom to evolve from an SNDC approach to a SCC approach at their own pace and according to local needs. While each of the preceding transition components is important to community development, the activities covered under "Supports to Community Development" are specifically intended to support locally-based efforts.

Provincial Transition Co-ordinator (PTC)

Consistent with the Terms of Reference for the SCC sub-committee, in April 1995, a SCC PTC was contracted to assist with the implementation of SCC throughout BC. MSS produced *Schedule A*,[48] a contract which outlines the expectations and deliverables for which a PTC would be responsible. Some of

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46 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services. *Supported Child Care: The Report of the Special Needs Day Care Review in British Columbia* by Special Needs Day Care Reference Committee, p. 40. Victoria, BC: Queens Printer for British Columbia. September 1993.

47 Province of British Columbia. *Analysis of "Child Care Regulation Review Working Document"* by Perrin, et al. Victoria BC. May 29, 1996.

48 Province of British Columbia. *Schedule "A": Services*. Victoria, BC. (Job Description for the PTC). No date.

these duties involve the development of various materials to be used as supports to community development. They include:

- write and edit at least 2 newsletters...; and,
- develop written information materials.

These activities are addressed later in the report. However, the use of the PTC position as a tool to support community development will be addressed here. This role encompasses the remaining duties listed in *Schedule A:*

- develop, manage and carry out a project plan;
- provide information, facilitation and support...to local and regional transition planning processes; and,
- establish and maintain regular liaison with affected provincial organizations.

The PTC's role as a tool to support community development has involved providing information, communicating new developments in the process, working with community representatives and provincial organizations to create a better understanding of SCC, communicating examples from region to region, and providing feedback from regions to the province.

The PTC has regularly and actively participated in the SCC sub-committee meetings. Individual community's progress and common concerns heard by the PTC are related back to the province through sub-committee discussions. Each month the PTC would distribute statistics for the previous month and a draft itinerary for the following month to each of the members. The monthly statistics recorded communication in terms of the number of phone calls, faxes, letters, meetings and talks held, travel days, workshop days, and visits to child care settings and homes. A chart of these activities to date over the fiscal year accompanies each monthly sheet. The itinerary outlines the dates of meetings and visits with different stakeholders within various communities in BC.

In the first year of the SCC transition project the PTC actively communicated with a variety of stakeholders in over 1300 telephone calls[49] and visited nearly 100 child care settings in approximately 30 communities throughout the province.[50] Meetings and visits with the communities have involved either formal presentations or more casual discussions that focused on the principles of SCC and the facilitation of planning for the transition. Often, the floor was left open for indivi-

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49 In an attempt to make the PTC more accessible to the community, the PTC's office number was placed on the newsletter.

50 Annual Provincial Co- ordinator Statistics.

duals to ask questions. The PTC also chairs regular conference calls, each with 40 lines designated to various transition planners throughout the province. People with whom the PTC comes into contact are told of the materials that are currently available to assist them, however the PTC is now looking for ways to better format and widely distribute the information.

In addition to these activities the PTC worked on the development of materials such as the Support Guide (as previously discussed), a Transition Handbook, and newsletters.

The creation of the PTC position has been described by provincial respondents as one of the highlights of the SCC project. Provincial respondents recognize that the connections made throughout the province and contact with the regions have put the PTC in a unique position from other provincial partners. For example, the PTC is in an excellent position to receive feedback from the communities and relay it back to the SCC sub-committee. One member of the sub-committee reported that it is "invaluable hearing what she hears". Provincial respondents feel the PTC is "competent" and produces "exemplary" work. The PTC's "high calibre, skills, and knowledge of the child care field" have been described as "a great strength" to the SCC transition process.

Regional comments echoed this assessment of the PTC's skills. They claimed that the expertise, articulation, and perspective of the PTC "lend credibility to the program". They also found the PTC very helpful and informative, for example,

> *"She helped to kick-start the SCC program here. I was running out of time. [We] put the names together, invited parents...and [the PTC] came and oriented us about SCC."*

The PTC's attention to smaller communities was also commended. Many regional respondents indicated that the PTC has provided "wonderful support" and it was stressed that the position continue to act as "an interface between the community and the system".

A couple of regional respondents showed little interest in the activities of the PTC. These respondents represented communities that claimed to "have a momentum and haven't required assistance from her" and/or have "lots of internal expertise". On the other hand, one regional respondent reported that communities there had not used the PTC because they were "not quite ready for her yet".

Transition Handbook

As part of the contractual obligations, the PTC was responsible for the creation of materials to provide information concerning SCC. One such tool emerged in the form of a handbook titled, *How to Get There...A Transition Handbook to Supported Child Care.* The handbook was developed as "a tool to assist

community partners as [they] begin the planning required for the transition to Supported Child Care."[51] In its initial development, the handbook was intended to be a brief overview of community planning. However, it grew to become a more detailed document that addressed individual community processes, provincial programs, and other detailed information regularly requested by the field. The new intention was to:[52]

- provide background information on community planning;
- suggest some practical steps to planning;
- provide some examples of tools used by communities; and,
- provide additional space to insert...community information.

The contents of the handbook evolved over the 1995/96 year. The handbook provides a detailed definition of SCC and the principles upon which it is based. It then discusses the process and steps involved in community planning. Using examples, the handbook shows a few of the steps that some communities in BC have taken to initiate planning. Issues and barriers common to many planning processes are flagged as well as "tips" from individuals who have been involved in SCC.[53] The handbook also provides a list of contacts from communities within each region as well as current Area Managers and their numbers.

The Transition Handbook was completed and forwarded to communities during the last week of evaluation interviews. Therefore, feedback was not available.

Newsletters

To date, the Community Support Services Division of the MSS has produced eight editions of the newsletter which span the time frame June 1993 to May 1996. Originally titled *Special Needs Day Care Review*, the newsletter was intended to update the activities concerning SNDC in British Columbia. However, as the focus of the Province turned to SCC, so did the focus of the newsletter. As a result, just after the distribution of *Government's Response*, the

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51 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Service s Division. "Why this Transition Handbook?", Why?, p. 2 –1. In Gay, Chris (ed.), *How to Get There...A Transition Handbook to Supported Child Care* . Victoria, BC. 1996.

52 Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Services, Community Support Services Division. "Why this Transition Handbook?", Why?, p. 2 –1. In Gay, Chris (ed.), *How to Get There...A Transition Handbook to Supported Child Care* . Victoria, BC. 1996.

53 This includes a summary of responses from SCC consultants concerning their experiences.

fourth edition of the newsletter was released with a new title, *Towards Supported Child Care*, to reflect this change in focus.

The PTC was contracted a few months later and one duty, outlined in *Schedule "A": Services*, was to:

> *Write and edit at least 2 newsletters, minimum 4 pages each.* (approx. June/July and Sept/Oct)

Since then, three more editions (6, 7, and 8) of the newsletter were produced by the PTC. The last newsletter to be distributed prior to the formative evaluation was presented with the subtitle *A Year in Review....* This edition briefly updated the events of the past year and included a short survey on the last page requesting feedback on both the newsletter and the SCC transition project as a whole. This feedback has not yet been received.

Some provincial respondents are concerned with the layout, content, and distribution of the newsletters. They perceive an overall communication gap between the Province and the regions but are unsure whether the newsletter is to blame. For example, they question the appropriateness of the content and the effectiveness of the layout – in which case the newsletter should be altered in some way. However they also concede that some other information source, distributed in addition to the newsletter (such as "one page memos" focusing on individual topics), may enhance communication. Difficulties with distribution have rested in two areas, according to provincial comments:

1. circulation to those on the mailing list, which is now consistently reviewed and updated; and,

2. circulation at the regional level, which is the responsibility of those who currently receive the newsletter.

Despite concerns relating to regional communication, provincial respondents are pleased with the newsletter for their own use. They have commented that the articles are "great", and often use them in progress reports.

Regional respondents do not seem as concerned about the breadth of the distribution as they are about the frequency of the distribution of the newsletter. They admit that "quarterly is realistic", however, are frustrated because "it's out of date when [they] finally get it". For the most part, the newsletter was described by regional respondents as accurate and useful in community discussions. They reported that the newsletter is a "useful document clarifying government policy and position on SCC" and that it "re-enforces on paper to the communities what is happening".

Furthermore, regional respondents suggested the addition of "a profile of one community's efforts where [SCC] is working" explaining that it would be "helpful to see what's been done elsewhere" and might avoid "recreating the wheel". One respondent explained the advantage:

"When [the PTC] was here she provided Terms of Reference from another community and a Schedule A for a facilitator's contract. It was good to have these models to work from."

In this way, perhaps planners could see how other communities have dealt with issues such as how "you find service providers who are willing to take in special needs kids" or how "you move the dollars from CDCs [Child Development Centres] to community day cares".

Conference Calls

One of the forms of communication that the PTC set up was a conference call that drew together members of planning committees and MSS staff from each of the MSS regions in the Province. The calls were intended to be one way in which the community planning committees from around the province could share and clarify information and discuss issues with the PTC.

Forty-four people participated in the first teleconference on February 26, 1996. Due to the number of people, challenges were presented regarding the format of the call, participation, and the agenda. For example, there were difficulties understanding the speakers and at some point the lines were reduced. Consequently, very little information was shared. However, another teleconference was planned for March 14, 1996. It was decided that, rather than follow an agenda of items to discuss, only one issue would be focused on for each conference. A subject for the next call was chosen and, to help avoid some of the problems of the first conference, the respondents were requested to:

- gather a diversely represented group around a speaker phone and choose a representative to speak for the group; and,
- discuss the subject of the call, prior to the conference, with others.

The subsequent conference calls were more organized, allowing more discussion and feedback from the respondents.

Subjects discussed in conference calls so far have included:

- improving communication between the provincial process and community steering committees;
- conflicts that exist at planning tables with specialized contracted agencies and strategies that have been used to improve working relationships; and,
- training issues on a provincial and local level, and other Ministry questions.

Representatives from the provincial SCC sub-committee attended the April 16, 1996 teleconference that focused on training and Ministry questions. Their knowledge and input was considered vital enough to continue participating in future conference calls.

Because the conference calls were, at first, very disorganized, provincial respondents questioned their usefulness. They felt that perhaps there were too many people on the call for worthwhile knowledge to be passed on. While admitting that the calls have become progressively more organized, provincial respondents continue to feel that either some reworking should be done or additional, smaller conference calls are required.

On the other hand, people from the regions[54] have stated that "teleconferencing is a very important way to make [SCC] a provincial process and pull everyone together". Respondents have found the calls "very helpful", for example, some have used the minutes from the call to "brainstorm in the community". Areas that are a little farther behind in the process explain:

> *"It is inspiring to hear where everyone else is – and we can aspire to that."*

These respondents have also suggested teleconferences that include only those areas at similar points in the process and/or "regional localized conference calls". This would be in addition to – not instead of – the regular conference calls. They still feel that it is important to "connect with others...to get the warnings to look for" and so that they "won't feel as alone out there".

Summary

Several centralized activities have been identified as key to a successful transition. These include Inter-ministerial Co-ordination, Training, Cost-Sharing, Tools to Support Inclusion, and Supports to Community Development. This section has reviewed the progress made in each of these component areas, specifically identifying tasks which were to be completed, progress, and the perspective of both provincial and regional players on how things are proceeding.

In all of the component areas, progress was made during the year. Generally, however, progress was not as rapid as originally envisioned, nor was it consistent across the component areas.

Inter-ministerial co-ordination, the primary responsibility of the sub-committee on SCC, is clearly a strength of the transition process, particularly at the provincial

[54] All of the following comments and information in this section were derived by sitting in on a teleconference when the regions were asked if they would like to continue with the conference calls.

level. The sub-committee is an effective and efficient vehicle, with meetings providing the appropriate forum for information sharing, issue identification, and problem resolution. The sub-committee is seen to have the appropriate membership and to be well-linked to what is happening in the larger child care sector.

During the first fiscal year, considerable progress was seen in terms of the varied training activities associated with this component of the Strategic Initiative. College-based ECE courses were revamped to incorporate the principles and practices of SCC. Thirteen colleges were funded to deliver such courses. Each of these colleges accessed student subsidy dollars and utilized innovative approaches to reduce barriers to education depending upon the perceived needs of their respective communities. Five Partnership Training Program Modules were under development during the year. These were modeled after an already existing module on Speech and Language which was seen to provide an excellent prototype. The approach utilized for these modules is viewed as an innovative and effective means of creating on-going partnerships. In addition, progress was made in terms of moving towards the identification of qualifications for SCC consultants with a contract for a needs analysis initiated. The contract was to be completed in August 1996, taking only 2-3 months longer than originally planned.

Despite this, considerable confusion exists around the training activities associated with the transition process. Regional staff expressed a desire for clarity in terms of the types of training planned by each Ministry, the audience, and access to funding. Furthermore, a need for greater inter-ministerial communication at the regional level was identified.

At the provincial level, considerable effort was directed towards deciding how the cost-sharing provisions of the SCC framework could be implemented. As cost-sharing is a critical component of the SCC framework, regional respondents were critical of the length of time it was taking to achieve policy clarity in this area. By April 1996, a phased-in approach to cost-sharing was adopted. However, the lack of clear direction in this area may continue to be a barrier to progress at the regional and community level. In addition, regional respondents emphasized the need for central direction in terms of the Special Needs Subsidy and expressed a desire for procedures which move away from global contracts. Regional respondents also expressed a desire for profiles of successful SCC services.

Considerable progress was made in terms of Tools to Support Inclusion with the Support Guide, Child Care Regulation revisions, and the criteria for accessibility grants drafted. Evaluation of the Support Guide is viewed as a necessary next step.

Over the year, an increasing number of vehicles were employed in order to share information with people involved in the transition process at the regional or community level. While the efforts were many and varied, and clearly progress was made, information sharing with the regions remained a weak area at the end

of the first fiscal year. This weakness was particularly evident in terms of regional respondent awareness of the components of the initiative and how they fit together.

I have no clear picture of how this all fits together.

It was also evident in the absence of linkages at the community level. Respondents, however, were particularly positive about the role and work of the Provincial Transition Co-ordinator.

SECTION FOUR – REGIONAL TRANSITION STATUS

Community development is central to the SCC component of the Strategic Initiative, for it is at the community level that the transition must be made. The MSS, which currently delivers SNDC, has front line responsibility for the transition to SCC. MSS staff must work with communities to organize local procedures for making SCC a reality in BC. The transition components discussed in the previous section of this report are all intended to support and facilitate the transition at the community level. This section explores progress made in moving towards SCC. The information in this section is presented in relation to the nine geographic regions of the MSS.

Transition Status

Progress towards SCC has been substantial considering the effective start-date for the regions was October 1995. Even though communities are at varying stages, all have begun implementation from the early community education efforts to hiring SCC consultants. Table 3 provides an overview of progress in each of the regions. It should be noted that, although communities may progress in their transition to SCC at similar rates, the process (with the exception of a few key components) varies considerably among the communities.

Community education, the establishment of steering committees, and hiring of facilitators have been the primary focus in most regions during the 1995/96 fiscal year. A more detailed table identifying each community's progress – if they have a facilitator contracted, a steering committee in place, terms of reference, public forum, plan date, and issues – is provided in Appendix B. Progress varies considerably.

Steering committee membership was discussed in the interviews. Representation from a variety of stakeholders was noted, including parents, MSS staff, Child Care Support Program representatives, college representatives, service providers,[55] school district representatives, Infant Development Program representatives, therapists,[56] and Mental Health representatives (Child and Youth Mental Health).

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55 Such as Child Development Centres if applicable and lic ensed and unlicensed service providers.

56 Such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists.

This initial stage of development, ending with the development of a community SCC plan generally takes up to a year. As most of the communities initiated this process in October of 1995, they are well on the way to October 1996 implementation plans. Ten of the forty-four communities listed have established dates for the delivery of SCC Transition Plans.

Some regions with remote communities have experienced a slower start to the community development phase. Regional respondents attributed this to their location, accessibility, transportation, winter weather conditions, community participation, and staffing.

Where SCC programs already exist[57] (i.e. Campbell River, Courtenay, and Kelowna), respondents believed that positive outcomes had already occurred — families were served well and waiting lists were reduced. The efforts of the local steering committees and past staff of Child Development Centres were highly commended in these communities. Independent community-based programs had been established. At least one Area Manager was able to report that parents, who once took their children to specialized centres for half days followed by regular child care for the rest of the day, were now able to register their child in one typical setting and have the resources come to them. Regional respondents from these mature SCC communities believe that there are "more options available in the neighbourhoods" and that "a continuum of care" exits.

In order to make the transition, MSS regional staff in these mature SCC communities have discontinued the block-funding of spaces and have focused on developing inclusive resources within their respective communities. Generally, the movement to SCC has involved and capitalized on the expertise of specialized centres. On rare occasions, this movement may mean the closure of the centres, although to date, this is thought to have occurred only once. Mature communities have used individual SCC consultant contracts and/or agency contracts for SCC consultant services. Consultants provide outreach services to children who require extra supports in all types of child care environments.

The variety of SCC community development processes and plans will certainly result in a variety of delivery models throughout the province at the end of the SCC Transition Phase.

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57 Some communities have been working more or less within the SCC framework for three years or more.

Table 3: SCC Transition — Community Progress (April 1996)

Region	Community	First Phase— Community feedback	Second Phase – Plan development	Final Phase— SCC implemented
A	Delta			
	Richmond			
	Vancouver			
B	North Vancouver			
	Sechelt			
	Squamish			
	Whistler			
C	Burnaby			
	Coquitlam			
	New Westminister			
	Maple Ridge			
	Mission			
D	Abbotsford			
	Chilliwack			
	Langley			
	Surrey			
	White Rock			
F	South Okanagan			
	E. Kootenays			
	W. Kootenays			
	Kelowna			
G	100 Mile House			
	Kamloops			
	Merritt			
	Revelstoke			
	Salmon Arm			
	Vernon			
	Williams Lake			
J	Dawson Creek et al.			
	Prince George et al.			
	Prince Rupert			
	Quesnel			
	Smithers et al.			
	Terrace, Kitimat			
	Vanderhoof et al.			
K	Campbell River			
	Courtenay			
	Nanaimo			
	Parksville, Qualicum			
	Port Alberni			
	Powell River			
	Port Hardy et al.			
L	Duncan			
	Greater Victoria			

Regional Funding

In 1995/96, a total of $978,000 was allocated to the regions to assist with community development and other transition activities.[58] Table 4 shows the budget and expenditures of each MSS region.

The expenditure data shows a surplus of $534,500 for the 1995/96 fiscal year. There are three reasons for this surplus. Firstly, the funds were not officially available until October 1995, some five months after the Strategic Initiative Agreement was signed. This delayed activities in each of the regions. Secondly, community planning activities such as hosting public forums, establishing community steering committees, contracting with SCC facilitators, are time consuming to initiate and complete. Thirdly, as each region or community began the year at different places along the path to SCC, some regions simply were not ready to spend the money at the time that it was available.

Table 4: 1995/96 Regional Budget Allocation

REGION	$ BUDGET	$ ACTUAL
A	$170,000	$ 63,633
B	40,000	14,555
C	154,000	90,099
D	70,000	38,371
F	45,000	20,674
G	72,000	21,428
J	186,000	61,662
K	125,000	95,760
L	116,000	31,317
TOTAL	$978,000	$443,500

In the 1996/97 fiscal year, the regions are likely to see increased expenditures. Many regional communities are just now starting intensive community planning exercises lead by contracted facilitators. Because of the delays in 1995/96, transition funding estimated for 1996/97 may require modification once communities have identified their needs and developed their SCC Transition Plans. One respondent summed it up,

> *"It was a mistake to plan for the transition funds in Year 1. Now we're ready with a plan but don't know if we'll have adequate funds available to implement it or whether we can carry unspent money from 1995/96 into 1996/97."*

58 This is included in Appendix A under the headings "Community Development" and "Transition Funding".

Revised transition budgets are under development. (Since this time, an announcement was made indicating that unspent funds from 1995/96 will be carried over into 1996/97.)[59]

One FTE (full-time equivalent) was made available to the regions in addition to the 1995/96 funding allocation. It was shared amongst the regions, amounting to approximately six weeks per region.[60] The entire FTE was utilized. Typically, it was used for backfilling ministry staff positions that were responsible for initiating SCC in their regions.

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59 At least one regional budget will be impacted when it re-aligns the way families have previously funded their "special needs" child in typical settings. For example, in some smaller communities, parents had already been funding "extra support" in typical child care settings by using their "At-Home" funds. In the future, the supports will come from the MSS region via the SCC consultant. This will impact the overall regional transition budget.

60 Three regions did not use any additional FTE support.

SECTION FIVE — CONCLUSION

The SCC component of the Strategic Initiative has had a slow but effective beginning in BC. Considerable progress has been seen at both the provincial and regional/local levels in moving towards SCC. The transition has been well-managed. Commitment, collaboration, and cooperation were generally depicted in the attitudes of those interviewed at both the provincial and regional levels. Respondents from mature SCC communities are already heralding its success. Despite this, there are many challenges to ensuring a successful transition to SCC. The major challenges, identified during the interviews conducted for this review, follow.

Challenge One — Philosophical Clarity

SCC is a principle-based framework. Two of the principles upon which it rests are inclusion and family-centred care, which encompasses parental choice as a leading descriptor. Both of these principles were embraced by all of those interviewed for this study. Yet, the application of these principles has, in some instances, been problematic for it is not clear which of the two principles is to take precedence when they come into conflict. Indeed, it is not clear to regional respondents if segregated settings may continue to be funded at the end of the transition period. Does the framework intend parental choice within the context of inclusive settings? If so, this needs to be clarified.

Challenge Two — Information Sharing

While the communication strategies utilized to date have been many and varied, information sharing remains an on-going challenge at the end of year one. Regional respondents, in particular, need more information about the components of the SCC transition, how they fit together, and their status. This need was particularly evident in relation to training where the responsibility and funds are spread amongst several Ministries.

Challenge Three — Educating the Stakeholders

Generally, respondents felt that the communication, education, and promotion efforts associated with the SCC component of the Strategic Initiative have increased the public's understanding of child care as it relates to children with special needs and their families. Some respondents noted that for the first time, they saw child care stakeholders working together collaboratively with an openness and willingness to jointly find solutions. The component "has forged relationships that would not have otherwise existed" — not only in the communities amongst parents, caregivers, and specialized service providers, but also within institutions such as colleges where the base-funded programs are seeing the advantages of collaborative approaches with the continuing education programs.

While new relationships have been forged, an on-going challenge in a number of regions is educating the stakeholders about the value of SCC — the benefits for the children and families involved. Many of the regional staff interviewed perceived a lack of trust on the part of parents and service providers. In a volatile fiscal environment, characterized by social services and education budget reduction, federal transfer cuts, a re-structuring of the health delivery system, and new child protection legislation, respondents believe that stakeholders are hesitant to trust the newest government initiative – especially when it may mean a considerable change in service for their children, or in the case of child care providers, their livelihood. While assurances of funding over the long term are desired by many, it is by no means clear that this alone would earn the desired trust.

Challenge Four — The Community-Based Planning Approach

The SCC component of the Strategic Initiative rests on a community development approach. Respondents were nearly unanimous in their support of this approach to implementing SCC. By allowing communities to adopt the new framework at their own pace and according to local needs, it is believed that a responsive system of child care for children with special needs can be achieved.

Despite this, much of the information received suggests that the community development approach is also the greatest challenge facing the success of the transition process. The reasons for this are two-fold. First, a community development approach is much more dependent than centrally-dictated approaches upon the varied competencies and commitment of local people. Fears were expressed by regional respondents about their ability to maintain volunteer commitment and steering committees during the course of the

transition. Furthermore, as many government employees are finding themselves working in an environment of change with competing priorities, it may indeed prove difficult to maintain the motivation of those responsible for making the transition a reality. Second, the community development approach makes the program ripe for inconsistencies/inequities — one of the reasons behind the review of SNDC. If this review is any indication of the long term, there will be great diversity in what SCC looks like across the Province four years from now. [61]

A Concluding Note on Systems Design

Existing data available from the Ministry of Social Services, regarding day care utilization and children with special needs, are limited. Available statistics only allow determination of the number of files open for SNDC, the total expenditure for special needs authorizations and agency contracts as well as regional breakdown of age, sex, and budget/expenditure. None of these sources captures the number of hours of service provided, the support needs of the children served, the type of child care setting(s), the hours of care provided, or the nature of the supports provided — information which would be useful to the summative evaluation of the transition to SCC. As such, the information collected during the review of SNDC assumes increased importance, providing the baseline for comparative purposes.

61 Furthermore, the success of this initiative is linked to the larger child care sector, which is itself described as "frail".

Appendix A

Funding

A total of $8.2 million was allocated to the SCC component of the Strategic Initiative for the period of the transition (1995-99). The funding was allocated to four provincial ministries and directed to specific transition elements. For the 1995/96 fiscal year, $2.2 M was allocated. The table below provides a breakdown of the budget to expenditures within each Ministry for the 1995/96 fiscal year.

SCC BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AND EXPENDITURES 1995/96
(Source: Federal Contributions— Strategic Initiative)

MINISTRY	TASK	Original Budget 1995/96	Revised Budget 1995/96	Actual Expenditures 1995/96
MSS	Provincial Co-ordination/ Community Development	$638,000	$ 638,000	$328,714
	Program Material Development (e.g. Support Guide)	70,000	70,000	4,737
	Travel/Consultation (non-employee)	10,000	10,000	11,070
	Transition Program Funding	450,000	450,000	334,375
	Orientation and Training	75,000,	50,000	3,639
	Financial Impact Analysis	25,000	25,000	25,000
MWE	Accessibility Grants	0	0	0
	Training Events*	25,000	50,000	50,000
MOH	Physiotherapy/Occupational Therapy Partnership Program	75,000	75,000	75,000
	Behavioural Management	80,000	80,000	80,000
	Family-Centred Care/Family Support Training Package	40,000	40,000	40,000
	Special Health Care Supports Training	40,000	40,000	40,000
	Manuals Revisions	10,000	10,000	10,000
	Deaf Partnership Program*		46,000	46,000
MSTL	Introduction Course	600,000	600,000	600,000
	Student Fee Subsidy	60,000	60,000	60,000
	SCC Consultant Qualifications Needs Assessment	50,000	50,000	50,000
	TOTALS	$2,223,000	$2,223,000	$1,758,535

* Transferred from MSS.

As indicated in the table, the total expenditure for the first year of the transition process was less than that allocated by over $450,000. The underspending

occurred in three areas: Community Development, Transition Funding and Orientation — each the responsibility of MSS.

Appendix B
Supported Child Care — Community Transition Status

Region	Community	SCC In Place?	Facilitator Contract	Steering Committee	Terms Of Reference	Public Forum	Working Groups	Tasks Undertaken	SCC Plan	Issues
A	Delta	SCC	Yes	Jan. '96	yes	yes	-	pilot project	-	Eligibility criteria
	Richmond	SCC	Yes	Sept. '94	yes	yes	-	pilot project	-	Costs
	Vancouver	SCC	Yes	-	yes	yes	7	-	Sept. '96	Cost, services
B	North Vancouver	SCC	Yes	Fall '93	yes	yes	5	-	Fall '96	Organization, assessment of children
	Sechelt	-	Yes	Mar. '96	yes	yes	-	-	Fall '96	Geog., supply of CC cyclical demand
	Squamish	-	yes	Mar. '96	yes	yes	-	-	Fall '96	Not enough Des., geog., cyclical demand
	Whistler	-	yes	Mar. '96	yes	yes	-	-	Fall '96	Geography
C	Burnaby	SCC	yes	Mar. '96	-	-	1	-	-	-
	Coquitlam	SCC	yes	yes & SCC Advisory Committee	-	-	-	-	-	CDC staff & facility issues
	New Westminster	SCC	yes	Mar. '96	-	-	-	-	-	Unique needs
	Maple Ridge	SCC	-	-	-	yes	-	-	-	-
	Mission	SCC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D	Abbotsford	SCC	Apr. '96	yes	-	yes	-	-	-	-
	Chilliwack	SCC	Apr. '96	yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Langley	-	Apr. '96	no	-	no	-	-	-	-
	Surrey	SCC	-	Nov. '95	yes	yes	-	Formed a non-profit SCC ed. society	-	Fears by professionals
	White Rock	SCC	-	Nov. '95	yes	yes	-	-	-	-
F	S. Okanagan Cawston Keremeos Oliver Osoyoos Penticton Princeton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	E. Kootenays	-	yes	Jan. '95	yes	yes	7 sub-	survey comm.	-	geog., delivery of

Region	Community	SCC In Place?	Facilitator Contract	Steering Committee	Terms Of Reference	Public Forum	Working Groups	Tasks Undertaken	SCC Plan	Issues
	Cranbrook Fernie Creston Elkford Wasa Invermere Kimberley Radium Sparwood Windermere						steering committees in small communi-ties	education		services, limited, OT/PT services exist now
	W.Kootenays Castlegar Trail Nelson Grand Forks	-	yes	Jan. '95	yes	yes	4	-	-	Parent participation, funding eligibility requirements
	Kelowna	-	yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	SCC program doesn't support ($) behav. challenged children
G	100 Mile Hse.	-	yes	June '95	yes	-	-	comm. survey	-	-
	Kamloops	-	yes	Feb. '96	yes	-	-	comm. survey	-	-
	Merritt	-	yes	-	-	Planne d	-	-	-	-
	Revelstoke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	funding
	Salmon Arm	SCC	yes	Mar. '96	yes	yes	-	-	Mar. '96	Trust MSS Staff Training
	Vernon	SCC	-	May '95	yes	yes	1. Facil., Guide; 2. Parent Adv.; 3. Caregivers; 4. ($) & Transition	-	-	CDC & SP participation
	Williams Lake	-	yes	Sept. '95	yes	yes	-	-	Fall '96	Parent participation, geog., CDC Transition Fears, Lack of CC data, SCC not understood
J	Dawson Crk. Ft. St. John Ft. Nelson Tumbler Rdg. Hudson Hope Chetwynd	-	yes	Oct. 95	yes	yes	-	-	-	Supply of CC &
	Prince Rupert	-	-	Apr. '96	-	yes	-	-		

Region	Community	SCC In Place?	Facilitator Contract	Steering Committee	Terms Of Reference	Public Forum	Working Groups	Tasks Undertaken	SCC Plan	Issues
										therapy services
	Quesnel	SCC	yes	Sept. '95	-	-	-	community survey	-	Parent partic., CDC Transition
	Smithers Hazelton Houston Granisle Topley Burns Lk.	-	yes	-	-	yes	-	-	July '96	Geog., Trust, Supply of CC
	Terrace Kitimat	-	-	Spring '96	-	-	-	-	-	CDC transition, Supply of CC
	Vanderhoof Frazer Lk. Ft. St. James	-	yes	Jan. '96	-	yes	3	-	-	CC supply, geog., volunteer burnout, ECE training & ed. $, 1:1 contracts
K	Campbell River	SCC	yes	Nov. '92	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Courtenay	SCC	yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	Co-ordinating parallel progs. (CDC & SCC)
	Nanaimo	SCC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1:1 contracts
	Parksville Qualicum	SCC	yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Port Alberni	SCC	yes	July '95	-	yes	Placement Committee	-	-	Co-ordinating parallel programs (CDC & SCC)
	Powell River	SCC	yes	Feb. '93	yes	yes	Community education	-	-	Co-ordinating parallel progs. (CDC & SCC), Service Provider participation, Fear of loss of services and quality
	Port Hardy Port McNeill Alert Bay	SCC	yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
L	Duncan	SCC	-	yes	-	yes	-	-	-	Gaps in service, school-age supports, training
	Greater Victoria	SCC	yes	May' 95	yes	yes	1. Commucations 2. Prof. Develop-	Training survey, workshops on collaboration managing change, conflict	Apr. '96	Poor turn-outs at forums

Region	Community	SCC In Place?	Facilitator Contract	Steering Committee	Terms Of Reference	Public Forum	Working Groups	Tasks Undertaken	SCC Plan	Issues
							ment 3. Community Partnership 4. Parent Advisory Group 5. Contractors Groups	resolution Developed discussion guide		